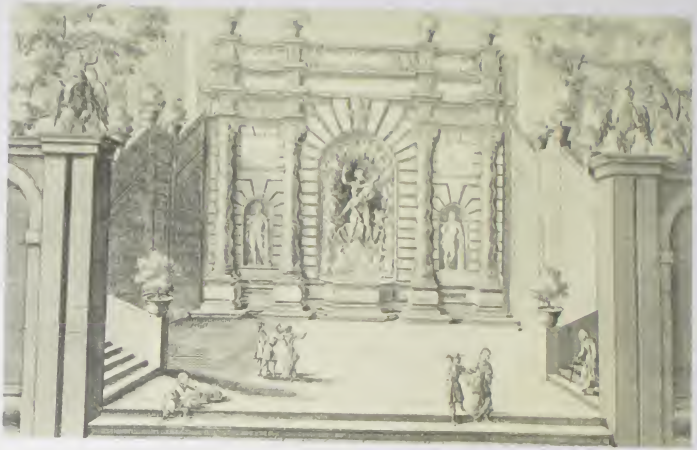

Engraving by Venturini (1685); the Fountain of Prosperine, formerly the Emperors' Fountain, since in the open-air dining space which made up its background, there were originally statues of the four Roman emperors who had built villas in the environs of Tivoli, i.e. Caesar, Augustus, Trajan, and Hadrian. The central niche of this fountain was to have held statues of Arethusa and two other nymphs, but they were never carved. Then in the 17th century the stucco group of Pluto and Proserpine (which caused the name of the fountain to be changed) was set up here.

The Fountain of Rome or Rometta rises upon a platform and symbolizes both Tivoli and Rome; in fact, the water descends as a fall to represent the Tivoli cascades, while at the same time a stucco statue of a rivergod holds up the Temple of the Sibyl; still farther below a statue portraying the Appennines is borne by the River Aniene. The water flows into the Tiber which has a boat in the middle to symbolize the Tiberine Islet. The boat itself has an obelisk for a mast to recall the Temple of Esculapius. On the platform stood the decorated part of the fountain begun in 1568 by the fountaineer Curzio Maccarone. It was semi-circular in shape and represented the Seven Hills of Rome and their major monuments; the hills were joined together by archways which, separately, represented the triumphal arches and, together, the Claudian Aqueduct. According to Zappi (1576), it was possible to pick out the Colosseum, the Septizonius of Septimius Severius, the Pantheon, etc. This fountain, the work of the Cardinal's archaeologist, Pirro Ligorio, still has the statue of Rome in the middle of its vast semi-circle. The statue was carved, after a design by Ligorio, by the Flemish sculptor, Pierre de la Motte. De la Motte is also responsible for the group of the She-wolf and Remus and Romulus. The group with a horse being attacked by a lion representing the struggle between Rome (the lion) and Tivoli (the horse), was added opposite the statue of the Wolf and twins in c. 1607.

This extraordinary fountain (without a basin to collect the water which flows at the base of the podium, and thus reminiscent of the Tiber) was used as a theater; the hemispherical layout of the small reconstructions of monuments in back of the podium creates a spatial area like that of the pits of Renaissance theaters. It should also be remembered that theater was one of the Cardinal's favorite pastimes and that his friend, the erudite French Humanist Marc-Antoine Muret used to write plays